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of Socrates, for that was part of the case against the Athenian democracy. Plato is, then, the best source for the real historic Socrates, though his intimacy with him was through his kinsmen Critias and Glaucon; he did not belong to the teacher's inner circle; yet his opportunities for learning to know Socrates as he really was were vastly greater than those of Xenophon.

At this point Burnet develops his theory as to the style and purpose of the Platonic dialogue. It belongs, namely, to that as yet unnamed literary *genre* to which Aristotle calls attention at the beginning of the *Poetics*. It had two distinctive marks: it used prose for its instrument and it was imitation. It included the mimes of Sophron and Xenarchus and also the Socratic discourses. This classification of the Platonic dialogue with the mime is, to Burnet, one of Aristotle's happiest thoughts. If the stories which are told of Plato's delight in Sophron are historical, we can see what suggested it. Plato's dialogues are really mimes, but with the difference that the characters are all real and well-known people. They are just the opposite of the speeches of Thucydides—which totally lack *genre* (what is called *ethos* in Lysias). Yet Plato is not led into anachronisms; in his character sketching he keeps up the illusion that his dialogues belong to the pre-revolutionary period. Burnet is but following Schleiermacher and Zeller (vs. Hegel) in feeling that there *must* have been in Socrates more than Xenophon tells us, to win, particularly, Pythagoreans of Thebes and the Eleatics of Megara, as Plato's *Phaedo* reveals he did. Burnet seems here to be aiming at Gilbert Murray, who declares that "the scenes in dialogues are even in Plato's hands admittedly unhistoric; after Plato's death, they are the merest imaginary conversations". To Burnet the historic Socrates is seen, then, through Plato; more than that, he may be seen even through Aristophanes's *Clouds*. When this play came out in 423 and Plato and Xenophon were babes, Socrates was still known chiefly as a student of natural science, and, if we take the *Clouds* and *Phaedo* seriously, making due allowance for comic exaggeration in the former, we get an account of the scientific position of Socrates that fits exactly into what we know of the intellectual atmosphere of the middle of the fifth century B.C. Anaxagoras and Empedocles were potent influences upon the teacher then; and the *Phaedo* tells us that when Socrates gave up natural science in despair he found satisfaction in what is generally known as the Theory of Ideas, which is really Pythagorean, and is earlier than Plato and even Socrates. So far as devotion to a theory of ideas requires the ecstatic vision, we know from the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus* that Socrates could possess that, and it is therefore surprising that E. Rohde's *Psyche* has no

chapter on Socrates. Yet Socrates was no Orphic for all that. His Attic *eironeia* saved him from turning mystic out and out.

This introduction is most interesting. Nor is it radical; rather its tone is reactionary and its arguments are built upon opinions that have in part been expressed long ago, but have not been generally held by Platonic scholars. The notes are helpful in translation and in understanding of philosophical points throughout; little or no grammatical discussion finds place. There are two good appendices on Death by Hemlock, and the Art of Glaucus.

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The Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism. By Franz Cumont. With an Introductory Essay by Grant Showerman. Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Company (1911). \$1.00.

In 1906 Professor Cumont published under the title *Les Religions Orientales dans le Paganisme Romain* a series of eight lectures which had been delivered shortly before at the Collège de France on the Michonis foundation and at the University of Oxford under the auspices of the Hibbert Trust. The work is now presented in English form with an introduction by Professor Showerman, giving some account of Professor Cumont's life and pointing out the significance of his work. By a happy coincidence the book appears at the time when its author is lecturing in this country. For all who know Cumont's work in the original no words are necessary to set forth the importance of this book. It deals with the leading facts in the moral and religious history of the Roman empire, and consequently with matters of profound significance for our own Christian religion and our present civilization. Therefore one may speak of it at greater length than is usually warranted in the case of a translation.

In his preface Professor Cumont defines his field, pointing out that Christianity spread in the Latin world only after it obtained considerable development; and that this development must be studied in Asia Minor where Christianity grew under manifold influences from other religions into that form which was afterwards established in the West. In this connection the author gives a timely warning against the tendency to overemphasize the influence of paganism on our faith. Certain practices and festivals of the Church were undoubtedly borrowed from paganism or influenced by it—the date of Christmas, and the polytheistic character of the worship of the saints are examples in point; but still it is true that on the whole Christianity imposed its influence on its enemies more than they imposed on it. Leaving Christianity aside, then, Cumont considers rather the way in which the Oriental pagan religions established their doctrine in the

Roman Empire, and the reasons why they acquired such wide authority in the periods antecedent to and contemporaneous with the spread of Christianity. The faiths from the East broke up the old national religion of Rome and showed that religion did not need to be connected with the state to secure wide dominion; they also, acting with other influences, shifted the point of view with which men looked on religion from that of a public duty to that of a personal opportunity and obligation. A happy salvation became the goal of life. These are some of the important themes handled in Cumont's book.

The first chapter on Rome and the Orient points out that, in comparison with the rude West and exhausted Greece, Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt were rich; they possessed an old and highly developed civilization so that they naturally influenced the West in politics, finance, science, and mathematics, while literature and to a certain extent art were cultivated chiefly by natives of the eastern part of the empire. Nothing was more inevitable than that the Orient should impose its religious belief also on the West and finally destroy Greco-Latin paganism. The reasons for the success of the Oriental religions are then discussed in the second chapter. The commercial and industrial superiority of the Orient sent many Levantine merchants to every part of the western half of the empire; the East was constantly furnishing slaves for the West, and eastern soldiers were found along the Danube and the Rhine, in Britain and in Spain. These Orientals acted as missionaries for their native religions and furnished the means for their diffusion. But the reasons why these religions found such speedy acceptance in the Latin half of the empire are not to be sought in the degeneracy of the West but in the great moral superiority of these faiths over Greco-Roman religion and over those Celtic, Germanic, and other cults with which they came in contact, in their larger appeal to religious emotion, and in their greater power to satisfy the deeper longings of mankind.

The next four chapters discuss at length the religious contributions of Asia Minor, Egypt, Syria, and Persia, from which came Cybele, Ma-Bellona, Isis and Serapis, the Dea Syria and the Baals under various names, Mithra, and a number of minor divinities. Each god had his companies of native devotees, each made his converts from the strangers in whose midst he settled, and each contributed to that final syncretism in which paganism ended.

Before proceeding to a consideration of the culmination of pagan religion, Cumont devotes a chapter to astrology and magic. These became influential when the ancient oracles failed and belief was lost in the forms of divination known to Greco-Roman religion. Astrology came partly as an exact science, partly as a religious faith. The observed

effect of the sun on the earth, vegetation, and animals, the apparent truth that certain constellations are accompanied by storms and that climates affect human character led men to the belief that there was an inevitable connection between the heavenly bodies and the earth through which every mundane phenomenon was absolutely ordered. The combination of Oriental doctrines of the stars and Stoic philosophy which Hellenistic thought effected produced an imposing system of which the most essential point was fatalism. This system was adopted sooner or later by all classes of society from the Caesars to the rabble. But, on the other hand, men believed that they could find escape from fate in magic. This, like astrology, was founded on a belief in the unity of the universe and in sympathy between the material and the spiritual world. By certain words, signs, or acts the very stars could be forced to modify their decrees and man could become in a sense master of his fate. Astrology and magic were not simply pseudo-sciences; they were rather faiths; they had their origin in Oriental temples and never quite forgot their birth.

In his final chapter Cumont discusses the transformation of Roman paganism by Oriental religions. The third century of our era saw a strange mixture of faiths in the Roman world. The rude practices of the common people, the official religion, local Celtic, Germanic, or Iberian worship existed together; side by side with them were the Oriental religions making new and masterful appeals, the Semitic cults, for example, with their ideas of an all-powerful god, mighty and eternal, Mithraism with its dualism of good and evil powers, resulting in an imperative ethical system. Most, if not all, Oriental cults possessed alluring rituals and made promises of salvation. In the apparent confusion of faiths the intellectual classes found harmony through Neo-Platonism, which, venerating all ancient religions, effected a combination of Oriental and western thought far removed from the beliefs of Augustus's day. In this synthesis the Oriental mysteries, the worship of the *elementa*—including the celestial bodies—in fact almost every form of religious expression found its place. The cosmic forces were regarded as divine, and the whole universe was thought to be animated by the one eternal and almighty god. The final outcome of Paganism was a solar pantheism.

This imperfect outline may suggest the interesting content of Cumont's book. It is more than a review of Oriental religious influence in the West. No one can read it without realizing that we have here from a master hand a great chapter in the religious history of mankind; no reader will fail to have his own concepts of religion broadened and deepened.

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